



Breaking News on Food & Beverage Development - North America

HOT TOPIC

HFCS – natural or not? Your views

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The issue of whether high fructose corn syrup (HFCS) may be considered natural or not has been an issue of hot debate in recent months.

Over the last month FoodNavigator has been asking industry and readers for their views.

We would like thank everyone who took the time to send in their comments. Below are is a selection of attributable responses, representing both sides of the argument.

"With the global epidemic of obesity and its associated health problems, it is my opinion that labelling a beverage that contains added HFCS as 'natural' is misleading and deceptive. HFCS is not a 'natural' ingredient but has been added to the product by the manufacturers. Furthermore, HFCS is basically just empty liquid calories.

The food industry must step up to the plate and take a proactive stance regarding curbing the production and labelling of foods that have any connection with fuelling the ever-growing epidemic of obesity and associated diseases."

Janet Bond Brill, PhD, RD, nutritionist and author

"Under FDA's longstanding policy regarding the use of the term 'natural' in food labelling, high fructose corn syrup (HFCS) has traditionally been regarded as a natural product. Like table sugar and honey, HFCS contains no artificial or synthetic ingredients or colour additives. The Corn Refiners Association is pleased that FDA has confirmed that HFCS and qualifying food products containing HFCS may be labelled as natural, based upon the agency's careful review of the process by which HFCS is made from corn, a natural grain product. FDA's clarification affirms that natural claims for HFCS are truthful and not misleading."

Audrae Erickson, president, Corn Refiners Association

"It's a joke to say it's natural, but thankfully most informed consumers know that 'natural' means virtually nothing on food labels these days."

Sue Muncaster, *The Ecogastronomy Initiative*

"We are aware of the recent comment from the FDA regarding high fructose corn syrup, and at this time, our position on this ingredient has not changed. High fructose corn syrup remains an acceptable food ingredient at Whole Foods Market. Needless to say, we continue to follow this issue very closely.

"While we do sell products with high fructose corn syrup, it is more the exception than the norm as in conventional markets. For example, although high fructose corn syrup is an ingredient in most conventional sodas, our own 365 Organic sodas are made instead with cane sugar. In fact, in every department throughout our store you'll find a wide array of products without high fructose corn syrup."

Whole Foods Market spokesperson

Next month's hot topic: Are organics a fad or the future?

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